

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 4660

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TAGS: UN, PFOR, SF, WA

SUBJ: US POLICY TOWARD NAMIBIA

1. WITH THE SC VOTE ON SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERSHIP BEHIND US, BUT WITH THE US STATEMENT ON NAMIBIA COMING UP IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 6, BELIEVE TIME IS RIPE FOR DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER APPROACH TO BE TAKEN BY USG TO ENCOURAGE PROGRESS TOWARD SELF-DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA.

2. THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED ARE NOT NEGLIGIBLE: SOUTH WEST AFRICAN NATIONALIST PARTY DECLARATION AS NOT ACCEPTED BY SWAPO (IN EXILE) OR BY UN COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA. AFRICANS AT UN ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC AT ALL ABOUT TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL ADOPTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR NAMIBIA, ALONG LINES PROPOSED BY BAROODY DRAFT RES IN SC DEBATE ON SOUTH AFRICA. SOUTH AFRICA, IN TURN, WILL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH UN COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA OR WITH UN COMMISSIONER FOR NAMIBIA. SAG WILL DEAL, IT SAYS, ONLY WITH SYG. BUT SYG'S MANDATE TO DEAL WITH SAG CONCERNING NAMIBIA WAS TERMINATED BY SC LAST DECEMBER.

3. WE BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT GREATEST HOPE FOR CHANGE IN NAMIBIA WILL COME FROM AN ENLIGHTENED SAG POLICY, PROBABLY INVOLVING CONTACTS WITH SWAPO. SWAPO INDEED MAY NOT BE REPRESENTATIVE OF WISHES OF ALL NAMIBIAN PEOPLE BUT, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, IT IS THE BEST ORGANIZED BARGAINING AGENT AND THE ONLY ONE WHICH THE MAJORITY OF AFRICANS HERE, IN AFRICA, AND AT THE OAU RECOGNIZE. FURTHER, IT PROBABLY IS ALMOST AS REPRESENTATIVE

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OF THE NAMIBIANS AS, SAY, FRELIMO IS OF THE MOZAMBIKAN NON-WHITES.

4. SOUTH AFRICANS HERE HAVE TOLD US THAT PROGRESS ON NAMIBIA WILL COME SOON AND THAT SELF-DETERMINATION MAY WELL BE IN THE CARDS "CONSIDERABLY" EARLIER THAN ORIGINALLY ANTICIPATED. WE BELIEVE THAT, WHILE THEIR PREFERENCE MAY BE FOR A CONFEDERATION, THE SAG HAS CONCLUDED THAT A BUFFER STATE, IF CREATED NOW, RATHER THAN LATER, WOULD SERVE THEIR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY-POLITICAL INTERESTS. ALSO, SINCE BLACK AFRICANS RECOGNIZE THAT PROGRESS ON NAMIBIA IS EASIER TO ACCOMPLISH THAN THE DISMANTLING OF APARTHEID, THEY WILL BE SATISFIED WITH SOME PROGRESS ON NAMIBIA PRIOR TO RENEWING EXTREME PRESSURE FOR CHANGES ON APARTHEID. SOUTH AFRICANS KNOW THIS AND ARE AWARE THAT GESTURE ON NAMIBIA WOULD GIVE THEM BREATHING TIME TO IMPLEMENT OTHER CHANGES INTERNALLY.

5. WE SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT DEPARTMENT REQUEST AMBASSADOR HURD TO APPROACH SAG TO:

A. STATE CLEARLY THE USG'S BELIEF THAT THE SAG MUST MOVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TOWARD SELF-DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA;

B. REQUEST SAG ADVISE US INFORMALLY OF SPECIFIC STEPS PLANNED AND, IF POSSIBLE, TIMETABLE;

C. POINT OUT THAT IT DOES NOT APPEAR FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE THAT THE NATIONALIST PARTY'S ANNOUNCEMENT WILL SUFFICE; AND

D. ENCOURAGE PRIVATE CONTACTS, POSSIBLY IN NY, BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICAN REPS AND THOSE OF SWAPO.

6. ANOTHER LINE THAT DEPT ALSO MIGHT CONSIDER WOULD BE TO MAKE IT KNOWN PUBLICLY THAT DEPT IS DISCUSSING WAYS IN WHICH USG MAY PERSUADE SA TO MAKE MEANINGFUL PROGRESS TOWARD SELF-DETERMINATION (AND INDEPENDENCE) IN NAMIBIA. THIS COULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IF IT APPEARED IN A PRESS WHICH RECENTLY HAS HAD, FOR THE AFRICAN READER, CHIEFLY NEGATIVE STORIES ABOUT USG POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA.

7. BELIEVE THAT US COULD HELP ASSUAGE BLACK AFRICAN CONCERN OVER OUR VETO OF OCTOBER 30 BY BACKING UP COURSE OF ACTION SUGGESTED
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IN PARA 5 WITH A POSITIVE STATEMENT ON NAMIBIA--AFRICANS' KEY INTEREST RIGHT NOW-BY AMBASSADOR WHITE, AT TIME OF HER SPEECH ON NAMIBIA IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE, NOVEMBER 6. OUR STATEMENT OF NOVEMBER 6 SHOULD INCLUDE:

A. POINT THAT THE USG WILL BE TALKING TO SAG CONCERNING THE DESIRABILITY OF GRANTING SELF-DETERMINATION TO NAMIBIA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. EXPRESSION OF BELIEF THAT PROGRESS IN

THAT DIRECTION WILL TEST THE INTENTIONS AND APPEAL SET FORTH IN THE SAG STATEMENT AT THE UNSC;

B. CALL UPON THE SAG TO SAY WHAT CONCRETE STEPS IT HAS IN MIND CONCERNING NAMIBIA;

C. STATEMENT THAT AS SITUATION DEVELOPS US IS GREATLY INTERESTED IN WORK OF COUNCIL OF NAMIBIA; AND

D. MENTION OF ANOTHER US CONTRIBUTION TO THE UN FUND FOR NAMIBIA, WITH REFERENCE TO THIS YEAR'S GIFT.

8. WE WOULD LIKE TO UNDERLINE OUR BELIEF THAT, IN THE COURSE OF DEPT'S CONTINUING REVIEW OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN POLICY, PRIME ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE DISPOSITION OF NAMIBIA. THE QUESTION WHICH WE THINK ALSO IS OF KEY AND PRIORITY INTEREST TO AFRICANS THEMSELVES.
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